DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 393 271 EC 304 718

AUTHOR Russell, Steven C., Comp.
TITLE "Stars Shine Bright Deep in the Heart of LDA." Poster Session Abstracts of the International Conference of the Learning Disabilities Association of America (Dallas, Texas, March 6-9, 1996).
INSTITUTION Learning Disabilities Association of America, Pittsburgh, PA.
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 37p.; For the 1994 Poster Session Abstracts, see ED 370 297.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Educational Methods; Elementary Secondary Education; *Instructional Effectiveness; *Intervention; *Learning Disabilities; *Student Characteristics; *Student Evaluation

ABSTRACT

This monograph brings together 16 one- to two-page abstracts from research poster sessions held at the March 1996 international conference of the Learning Disabilities Association of America. The first section, addressing research on assessment and characteristics of students with learning disabilities, includes abstracts on the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery in predicting university success, learning problems in homeless adolescents; literacy acquisition of Hispanic students; depression and learning disabilities; parents' and teachers' perceptions of children's language ability; cerebral blood flow in developmental specific learning disabilities; and a hypothesis of neuroanatomic localization and learning disabilities. The second section, addressing research on instruction and treatment, includes abstracts on self determination for youth with mild disabilities; the correlation between tutor usage and academic grades; transition from a special education school to a mainstream middle school; multisensory structured language techniques using the Wilson Reading System; metacognitive skills in the workplace; effects of self-monitoring with students having attention deficit disorders; effects of self-instruction on writing skills of students with learning disabilities; literacy in students with learning disabilities; and parent perspectives on inclusion. (DB)

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"Stars Shine Bright Deep in the Heart of LDA"

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"Stars Shine Bright Deep in the Heart of LDA"

Learning Disabilities Association of America

International Conference
Dallas, Texas
March 6-9, 1996

POSTER SESSION ABSTRACTS

compiled by

Steven C. Russell, Ph.D.

This portion of the yearly LDA conference, the Research Poster Sessions, has become anticipated eagerly by conference attendees interested in the most recent research related to individuals with learning disabilities. This format allows for the exchange of information through both formal (availability of abstracts, handouts of papers, and display of posters) and informal (discussion with the presenter[s]) means.

This year we continue another means of sharing the results of research. At the request of previous research poster presenters, and conference attendees, submitted abstracts have been compiled in the following booklet. I am happy to report that this is the first volume that includes an abstract from each research poster session scheduled for the conference.

Thanks to all who took this opportunity to share their abstracts. We've set a new "standard" for future conferences!

S. C. R.
1996

Learning Disabilities Association of America
International Conference
Dallas, Texas
March 6-9, 1996

Research Poster Session Abstracts
Volume 5
compiled by Steven C. Russell

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Adding Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery Achievement Scores to Predicting University Success

Predicting university academic success for students with learning disabilities is problematic for admissions officers and disability service providers. While postsecondary institutions with open enrollment policies will not be as concerned with the predictors as the more competitive institutions, identification of successful predictors is critical. Admission criteria including high school academic grade point averages or overall grade point averages and standardized test scores are common. Disability service providers are likely to analyze other variables, such as test scores from intelligence tests along with their subtest scores as well as scores from achievement testing on standardized Psychoeducational batteries to predict success and make recommendations for student success, if called upon.

A pilot study was completed on university students with learning disabilities to determine if typical admission criteria of high school academic or overall grade point averages and/or the Scholastic Aptitude Test would predict cumulative grade point averages. Additionally, IQ Verbal and Performance scores, subtest scores and Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-R Reading and Writing Achievement scores are analyzed for prediction. The students (N=24) all received academic support through a comprehensive program for college students with learning disabilities. The students are white, urban, upper-middle to upper socio-economic status and are between 18 and 21 years old.

Regression analysis was run on this sample revealing that the combined variables account for major portion of the variance (R-sq = 91.3%). High school overall grade point average accounts for a major portion of the variance (R-sq = 36.2)in predicting cumulative grade point average,

while SAT-C accounts for an insignificant portion of the variance (R-sq = .7%). Achievement subtests of for Broad Reading (R-sq = 18.5)and Written Language (R-sq = 8.3%) of the variance.

Additional findings will be presented at the conference using a larger sample. Complete data will be distributed.

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LEARNING PROBLEMS IN HOMELESS ADOLESCENTS

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent Homelessness has become a national enigma. Teenage runaways are growing faster that services can begin to meet their needs. The causes of adolescent homelessness remain a mystery. Researchers and politicians are struggling to unravel the causes of this tragic epidemic. We know adolescents are subject to the highest rate of abuse and neglect, drug and alcohol addictions are rising and that drop out rates exceed 50% in some urban areas of our country. What we know is that all these factors play a role in the disintegration of families and communities. The etiology of the factors is only beginning to be investigated. This study is one such beginning.

Undiagnosed disabilities can be one such factor that impedes communication, creates frustration and escalates problems both within families and frustrations with school. These disabilities may increase a child's likelihood to drop out of school and fall into the cycle of homelessness and economic disadvantage. These homeless youth have limit opportunities and often support themselves through pan handling and other activities that lead youth to the juvenile justice system..

Due to the growing interest in the possible role of learning disabilities in the etiology of homeless ness, the Administration for Children and Family Services of the US Department of Health and Human Services issued a supplementary contract to YouthCare, in Seattle, Washington to study learning disabilities in the runaway and homeless population. The goal of this project is twofold. First to determine the prevalence rate of learning disabilities in the adolescent homeless population. Secondly to develop a brief screening tool to be used by lay staff in all runaway shelters at intake to help identify potential problems for further testing.

METHODS

140 runaway youth were administered the proposed screening tool. The youth were identified through the SHELTER program and The ORION Center (a dropin center and school for Street involved youth) and Outside INN(a drop in progran located in Portland Oregon). Key items will be identified and further tested through computer analysis for reliability.

78 youth were tested using a predetermined battery designed to diagnosis learning disabilities. This battery included the:

1. WIAT (Wechsler Individual Achievement Test)
2. WISC-R . A standard IQ test for youth 16.11 and under
3. WAIS-R A standard IQ measure for youth 17 and older
4. PPVT (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test)

All tests were chosen through consultation with professionals familiar wit the diagnosing of learning disabilities and the needs of homeless youth.

RESULTS

As this is the second part of a pilot study, still in progress, we have preliminary results from the initial data set. We found a prevalence rate of 69% within THE INITIAL DATA SET AND 52% WITHIN THE 2ND DATA SET. It should be kept in mind that the sample size was extremely small and our Confidence interval goes down to approximately 50%.

In the initial screen data analysis the primary indicators of learning disabilities were discrepant tests results. We scored for a possible LD if the math and reading levels were three or more grades apart; if there was three or more grade difference between the last completed grade and the grade level indicated by the achievement tests; or if there was a substantial discrepancy between achievement and ability. We are refining this in the follow up study. IN total we will have gathered 150 screen to be compared with non LD students and youth who are in the home and have a formal diagnosis of LD. The goal is to develop a short screen that would be used to alert shelter staff of the need for further referrals for LD testing. We will be reporting on Both data sets and the progress of the screening tool under development.

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DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERNS AND CROSSLINGUISTIC TRANSFER IN THE LITERACY ACQUISITION OF HISPANIC STUDENTS

This study investigated the acquisition of literacy in bilingual Hispanic students who were in a transitional stage in literacy development, as well as a transitional stage in language instruction. It is based upon the developmental view of reading and the language transfer theory. A strong oral language base is seen as the foundation upon which monolingual learners build reading skills since skill in reading requires both automatic word recognition and language comprehension. Studies with monolingual readers (Sticht & James, 1984) have shown that, once decoding is accounted for, skill in listening comprehension is predictive of eventual skill in reading comprehension. During the initial stage in the acquisition of literacy, listening comprehension is normally superior to reading comprehension because the student is still developing word recognition skills. A student in the transitional phase would be expected to be closing the gap (by about the sixth or seventh grade) between listening and reading comprehension, as word recognition skill develops. Once word recognition is both accurate and automatic, reading comprehension is expected to become equal to and/or surpass listening comprehension.

Bilingual education is based upon the language transfer theory. The language transfer theory suggests than literacy in L1 has a bootstrapping effect on the development of literacy in L2. The relationship between oral language proficiency and the development of reading in monolingual and school-aged bilingual children should follow similar, although not necessarily identical, developmental steps since two linguistic systems are involved instead of one in the case of bilingual children. Moreover, listening comprehension of extended discourse requires decontextualized or academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1991; Snow, 1990) which develops over a period of time. Comparison of listening and reading comprehension of extended discourse can indicate whether a bilingual student's comprehension of passages in listening and reading does or does not follow the progression seen in monolingual children and whether a bootstrapping effect (crosslinguistic transfer) takes place.

The research questions concerned whether 1) the level of academic language proficiency in L1 and L2 predicts growth in reading over the period of an academic year, 2) the extent to which listening is related to reading in L1 and L2, and 3) the bootstrapping effect, i.e. whether students who have proficiency in oral language in L1 make greater progress over time in L2 than students who are low in academic oral language proficiency in L1.

Method

Subjects: The subjects were 18 native Spanish-speaking fifth-grade students in a dual language program at a public elementary school with a large (31.2%) Hispanic enrollment in a suburban area of Chicago, Illinois. The participating students were from working class families and ranged in age from 10.0 to 11.4 years (mean = 10.8).

Materials and Procedures: The students were given the following measures: 1) Raven's *Standard Progressive Matrices* to establish nonverbal reasoning abilities; 2) *Language Assessment Scales* (LAS) to establish oral language proficiency in English and Spanish; 3) *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills* (ITBS) and *Spanish Assessment of Basic Education* (SABE) to establish reading proficiency in English and Spanish; 4) Bilingual Listening and Reading Test (BLRT) an experimental measure consisting of three subtests in English and in Spanish: listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and word recognition. The listening and reading comprehension subtests used a sentence verification technique with passages with readability levels of grades 3 to 5. Students were given the BLRT using a counterbalanced design in the fall and the spring of their fifth grade year.

Results and Discussion

General improvement was seen on all tasks in both languages, and a significant improvement was seen in reading comprehension across languages. Means suggest slightly stronger performance in English than performance in Spanish on all tasks. Analyses of the relationships among listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and word recognition indicate that developmental patterns in English were similar to those seen in studies of monolingual English readers of the same age. Crosslinguistic analyses support the bootstrapping theory that earlier proficiency in L1 makes a significant contribution to subsequent reading comprehension in L2. Implications suggest that support and development of decontextualized language comprehension and literacy in L1 facilitates development in L2. Knowledge of developmental patterns in bilingual learners can aid educators in helping students with learning problems.

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DEPRESSION AND LEARNING DISABILITIES

This poster session will describe the results of the author's research focusing on the characteristics of learning disabled adolescents who exhibit depressive symptomatology. In a study of the relationship between LD and depression, three groups of subjects were used: 16 adolescents with a "Nonverbal Learning Disability" (NVLD), 17 adolescents being treated for depression in an inpatient psychiatric facility, and 19 language learning disabled students who showed marked symptoms of depression. Based on previous research, this study investigated the hypothesis that depressed individuals perform relatively more poorly on visual-spatial tasks. All subjects were given a battery of visual-spatial tests, and IQ data were collected for all participants.

Results showed that contrary to expectation, the depressed inpatients performed *better* than the other groups on several of the visual-spatial tests. In a subsidiary analysis, a group of depressed NVLD students was compared with a group of nondepressed NVLD students. Results again showed that the depressed subjects performed *better* than their nondepressed counterparts.

In discussing the present findings, it is noted that previous research linking depression with poor visual-spatial processing was confounded by the use of subjects who were on medication, or who had comorbid diagnoses, a history of drug abuse, or low IQ.

Post-hoc analysis showed a significant correlation between VIQ-PIQ discrepancies, in either direction, and severity of depressive symptomatology. Therefore, it was hypothesized that intermediary variables (i.e., learning disabilities, environmental factors) may mediate the relationship between depression and cognitive processing.

In the post-hoc analysis, a sample of 57 subjects was divided into three groups: a group of subjects with at least a 12-point VIQ-PIQ discrepancy (in either direction) (n=30), and those with less than a 12-point VIQ-PIQ

discrepancy (n=27). The FSIQ's were nearly identical between the two groups. The mean VIQ-PIQ discrepancy for the first group was 17.4 points; for the second group, the mean VIQ-PIQ discrepancy was 5.7 points. The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) was then administered to all subjects. Based on ANOVA procedures, results indicated that the large VIQ-PIQ discrepancy group had significantly higher mean BDI scores (that is, more depressive symptomatology).

In fact, there was an unusually large number of depressed LD adolescents in this sample who had substantial VIQ-PIQ discrepancies, in either direction. Although only 17.7% of the WAIS-R standardization sample had a 15-point or greater VIQ-PIQ discrepancy in either direction, 58% of the depressed LD subjects in this study (n=19) had at least a 15-point VIQ-PIQ discrepancy.

A possible causal model is suggested, which would explain the results of this research. This "Frustration-Self-Esteem Model" proposes that there is a relationship between learning problems, academic success, and self-esteem and depression. According to this model, children with large VIQ-PIQ discrepancies have a sharp contrast in their innate abilities, where they are very good at some tasks, but much poorer in others. This may mean that these children excel at, say, math, but have great difficulty in language arts. Others may be excellent readers, but cannot pass algebra and geometry. Because these students are so competent in some areas, their parents, teachers, and they themselves expect the *same* high level of competence in *all* areas. When this doesn't happen, frustration sets in. If the frustration builds up and is unresolved, naturally, self-esteem would be negatively impacted. Over time, this could lead to more serious affective issues, such as acting out behaviors and/or depression.

The author is presently conducting further research, investigating the relationship between VIQ-PIQ discrepancies and depression in LD students. Several questions are being raised: Do depressed LD students have disproportionately large VIQ-PIQ discrepancies, relative to their nondepressed peers? Likewise, is there a significant positive correlation between the magnitude of VIQ-PIQ discrepancy (in either direction) and the severity of depressive symptomatology, as measured by BDI scores? This current research should be completed this winter, and results presented at this LDA poster session.

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Parents' and Teachers' Perceptions of Children's Language Ability

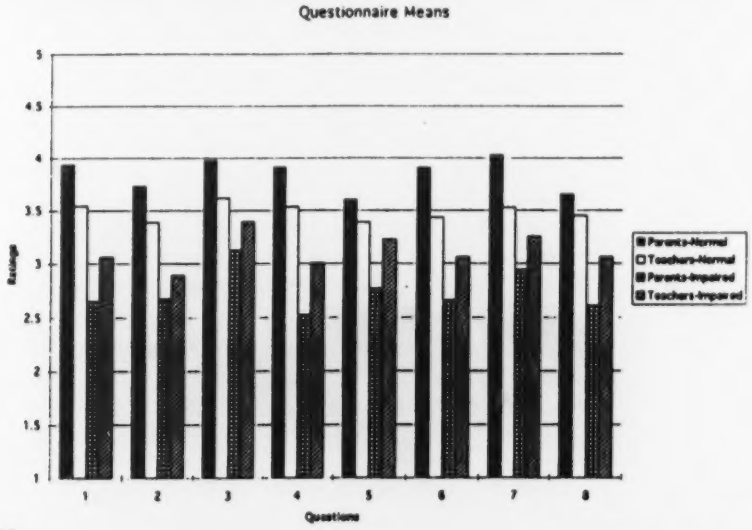
Both parents' and teachers' estimations of children's language abilities have important implications for educational and assessment purposes, since these are the individuals who are likely to identify children with delayed or impaired skills. Questions have been raised concerning the accuracy and reliability of parental and teacher estimates of children's abilities, but research in this area is just emerging. The research with normally-developing children has found significant correlations between parental estimates of ability and the child's actual language skills and developmental level, but it also suggests an overwhelming trend of parental overestimation of their children's language ability relative to test performance (Hunt & Paraskevopoulos, 1980; Miller, 1988; Miller, Manhal, Mee, 1991). Teacher's have also been found to overestimate children's language and cognitive skills (Miller & Davis, 1992). The one study that has examined mothers' estimations of children's language skills in the impaired population found that these mothers also overestimated, but not to the same extent (Evans & Kirchmann, 1993).

The present research provides more evidence regarding parents' and teachers' ratings of children with impaired language skills. Parents and teachers of language impaired (25) and normally developing (52) five- and six-year olds completed an eight-item questionnaire that asked them to rate each child on the following language skills using a 5-point Likert scale: (1) appropriateness of language, (2) ability to adjust language in different settings, (3) understanding others, (4) finding words, (5) use of word endings, (6) sentence length and complexity, (7) vocabulary size and (8) grammar (tense and word order). The children were also administered standardized expressive and receptive language tests (Curtiss-Yamada Comprehensive Language Evaluation -Expressive Subtest; Test of Auditory Comprehension of Language-Revised).

The results suggest that the pattern of estimations by parents and teachers of impaired children was significantly different from that of the normal children (See figure). Parents of normal children overestimated their child's language ability both in comparison to estimates by their child's teacher and in terms of the child's performance on the standardized language tests. The teachers' estimates of language skills accurately estimated the children's performance on the tests. In contrast, in the impaired population parents' estimates of their child's language ability were lower than estimates by their child's teacher, but neither the teachers'

nor the parents' estimates were significantly different than the child's test performance.

The discrepancy between the parental estimations in the two language samples suggests that these two groups of parents are viewing their child's language skills differently. The lack of overestimation by parents of language-impaired children could mean that these parents have lowered their expectations of their child's skills, perhaps due to the parents' experience with a child with limited language skills or 'the act of labelling' a child. Given Hunt and Paraskevopoulos' (1980) match hyptohesis, parents with lowered expectations may not be providing their children with the optimal level of stimulation. These results highlight the importance of being cautious when using parents' estimations of preschool and early school-age children's language skills. The accuaracy of these estimations may vary depending on the language skills of the child.



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Regional Cerebral Blood Flow in Developmental Specific Learning Disabilities (DSLD) [*J Neurol Psychiatr Clin Neurosciences* 1995;7:420.]

Abnormal cerebral function has been implicated as the underlying problem in various DSLD and behavior disorders [*J Child Neurol* 1995;10(Suppl 1)S78-S80.]. In order to document such cerebral abnormalities, we undertook to study a series of patients with severe DSLD using Xe-133 inhalation regional cerebral blood flow SPECT. We studied 23 patients (16 male, 7 female) ranging in age from 18 to 40 years (mean 22 years). All patients had normal intelligence, but experienced varying degrees of school and social failure. All had subtle motor findings, but the remainder of the neurologic examination was normal. Based on previously reported classifications [*J Child Neurol* 1986;1:158-172. *J Child Neurol* 1995;10(Suppl 1):S23-S30.], the types of DSLD were: 2 with pure right hemisphere, 2 with pure left hemisphere, and 19 with bihemispheral (6 right>left; 8 left>right; 5 equal hemispheral involvement). CBF images (with the camera angled 15 degrees forward from horizontal) were obtained at two cerebral levels: the level of the angular gyrus and the level of the orbital frontal cortex. Abnormal scans were found in 10 cases across the various DSLD groups and consisted of decreased CBF in frontal, temporal and parietal cortex. The location of abnormal hypoperfusion did not correlate with the DSLD clinical signs of hemispheral involvement. All had evidence of right hemispheral hypoperfusion, even in those cases with left hemispheral DSLD. However, there was a correlation between abnormal scans and the presence of a history of depression: of the 14 patients with depression, 10 had abnormal scans, while none of the patients free of a history of depression ($n=9$) had abnormal scans ($\chi^2=11.4, P<0.001$). Thus, despite similarly matched DSLD, the only factor correlating with

disturbed CBF was depression. This suggests that depressive illness is associated with focal cerebral metabolic dysfunction and correlates with our previous contention [*Neurol Clin* 1990;8:677-703.] that a major underlying factor associated with maladaptation in the learning disabled population is depressive illness. Previous reports of abnormal xenon blood flow studies in DSLD might have related to unrecognized depression as the basis for the abnormality.

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Developmental Specific Learning Disabilities (and Four Select Behavioral Disorders): An Hypothesis of Neuroanatomic Localization

[*Pediatr Neurol* 1992;8:360.]

Reproducible identification of learning disabilities is possible using an expanded version of the previously described taxonomy for developmental specific learning disabilities based upon cerebral functional localization [*J Child Neurol* 1986; 1:158]. Utilizing this taxonomy, developmental specific learning disabilities are the results of abnormalities in discrete temporo-parietal brain areas. Dysgenesis of left Heschl's gyrus (Brodmann areas 41L, 42L) relates to primary receptive dysphasia ("lip reader"), while dysgenesis of left posterior superior temporal gyrus (parts of 22L) results in poor spelling (poor phonemic recall). Dysgenesis of posterior left superior temporal gyrus (area 22L) produces nominal recall dysphasia. Abnormality of posterior parietal cortex (prestriate cortex or superior parts of 19L) results in word storage dysphasia (poor inner vocabulary). Dysgenesis of left angular (area 39L) and posterior superior temporal (parts of 22L) gyri produces the classic dyslexia syndrome (defective reading, spelling, nominal recall). Abnormality of left supramarginal gyrus (area 40L) results in defective storage of graphemes (asymbolia). Verbal dyslogia (auditory verbal agnosia; defective inner speech with improper word-to-image storage) results from dysgenesis of parieto-temporo-occipital junction (visual association cortex or inferior parts of 19L), while abnormalities in right visual association cortex (inferior parts of 19R) produce visual dyslogia (receptive visual aprosodia or poor image-to-word storage). Dysgenesis of right superior parietal lobule (area 7R) results in dyspraxias ("clumsy child syndrome"). Abnormality of right posterior parietal cortex (prestriate cortex or superior parts of 19R) produces the Asperger's syndrome with either hypoprosodia/hypoemotionality or hyperprosodia/hyperemotionality. Abnormality of right angular and supramarginal gyri (areas 39R, 40R) produces the developmental Gerstmann syndrome (poor ordering,

transpositions, dysgraphia, and finger dysgnosia). Dysgenesis of right angular and supramarginal gyri and anterior prestriate area (areas 39R, 40R, and parts of 19R) leads to the primary disorder of vigilance.

Children doing poorly in school most commonly have bihemispheric deficits with the impairment of right hemisphere functions accounting for the clinical problems. Detailed neuropathologic and neuroimaging investigations of learning disabled children and adults (since the specific language/communication dysfunctions persist into adulthood) should validate these anatomic localizations.

The poster presentation and accompanying handout depict areas of dysgenesis utilizing the Brodmann map of cortical sites; a proposed classification system for the various learning disability syndromes in relationship to these discrete cortical areas; and four behavioral syndromes: autism and pseudo autism; depression; mania; and the primary disorder of vigilance. [*J Child Neurol* 1995;10(Suppl):S78-S80.]

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Self-Determination for Youth with Mild Disabilities: Moving Toward Empowerment

Current findings from several national longitudinal studies and educational excellence research reports indicate growing concern regarding individuals with learning disabilities (Wagner, 1990; Edgar, 1988; de Bettencourt, Zigmond & Thornton, 1989; Hasazi, Gordon & Roe, 1985; Neel, Meadows, Levine & Edgar, 1988; Mithaug, Horiouchi & Fanning, 1985). Several factors are likely to pose significant life-long difficulties for youth with disabilities. These factors include unemployment, underemployment, the failure to receive a high school diploma, difficulties in independent living, and a lack of adequate social skills (Miller, Green, La Follette, 1990). Compared to non-disabled youth in similar age cohorts, youth with learning disabilities have a higher level of unemployment and a lower than average high school completion rate (Thornton & Zigmond, 1987; Sittlington & Frank,1989). The clear implication from these studies suggest that students are not leaving our nations schools with all the skills necessary for survival and satisfaction in the adult world. One such missing skill is self-determination.

The central purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how learning disabled youth develop skills for enhancing self-determination learning outcomes. This study examines the construct of self-determination for students in school-based and community-based programs. In the study, self-determination was defined as a set of skills and attitudes which allow the individual to act as primary causal agent in one's life, without undue external influences (Wehmeyer & Berkobien, 1991).

The qualitative study investigated the perspectives of individuals in three sites (rural, suburban and urban) where specific self-determination curriculum was implemented. Ethnographic practices allowed the researcher the opportunity to become absorbed in the lives of these students. The study was conducted over a period of one year.

Participant voices in this research revealed that individuals with disabilities can become active participants in school and community experiences leading toward effective school-to-work and adult transitions if they possess self-determination skills and knowledge.

This study posits several factors which must be considered as we evaluate quality programs for individuals with learning disabilities. Six key factors, however, are discussed in significant detail. These factors emerged in the grounded theory of self-determination because they represent overwhelming perspectives in the study analysis. The factors, relating to issues of socialization as well as school reform, provide policy makers and practitioners with the guiding light we have traditionally lacked. Predicated upon the quantitative data provided in longitudinal studies, these findings add the student and young adult voice that has been so consistently overlooked in research.

Based upon the findings and fulfilling an obvious need, new and innovative products and services have been developed (Holub, 1995). These include, but are not limited to; a teaching curriculum with over two hundred self-determination development strategies, a personal management planing guide for individuals with learning and behavioral disabilities, parent and teacher training sessions, and a school-to-work transition framework which infuses self-determination into current policy and practice as well as future restructuring initiatives.

There is no option for disregarding these findings. Understanding the value of self-determination learning outcomes and linking them to school and postschool successes will open new doors and provide rich new knowledge to our current programs and will serve as a guiding structure for those we develop in the future.

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The Correlation Between Tutor Usage and Academic Grades Regardless of Full Scale Intelligence.

The Clinical Center Achieve Program is an academic support program for college students with learning disabilities at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Established in 1978, the Achieve Program provides numerous support services to approximately 175 students. One of the most important services with regard to a student's success appears to be tutoring. Students in the Achieve Program receive a tutor for each academic course. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange meeting times with pre-arranged tutors throughout the semester. It appears likely that the more a student uses a tutor for his/her courses, the better the student will perform academically.

One would assume that the student's Full Scale IQ would play a large part in determining the success of the student at the post-secondary level, but this study seeks to disprove that theory and demonstrate that it is the student's use of the tutoring service that, in part determines his/her success in a particular semester. Although motivation does influence a student's academic success, this study assumes that each Achieve student in the study is equally motivated.

The hypothesis to consider for this study is that there is a positive correlation between a student's use of a tutor and his/her course grades for a particular semester, regardless of that student's Full Scale IQ as measure by the WAIS-R.

There are several variables to consider for this study. The sample size will be 130 Achieve students from the Spring 1995 semester. The overall tutor hours the student utilized over the course of the semester will be examined. This information will be gleaned from a database compiling all of the students' tutor usage hours for the semester. Also examined will be the course grades from these 130 Achieve students. Anything above a "C" in a course will be considered a successful grade in a class. These 130 students' Full Scale IQ scores from the WAIS-R will also be considered.

It is the goal of this study to show the importance of tutors for individuals with learning disabilities at the post- secondary level. This study also has implications for further study into the importance of other types of accommodations for the individual with learning disabilities.

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"Essential Skills for a Successful Transition from a Special Education School to a Mainstream Middle School"

This presentation describes the academic skills and learning strategies which a student needs to acquire in order to facilitate a successful transition from a special education elementary school to a mainstream middle school. The information in this presentation was derived from a survey that was sent to private, mainstream middle schools in the New York City area, from informal conversations with graduates of elementary schools for children with learning disabilities (and their parents) who have made the transition to mainstream schools, and our own on site observation of mainstream private and public schools. The results of this survey offer guidance to educators as they determine priorities in deciding what and how to teach, how to best prepare the child for the transition, and how to make the determination that the child is ready to make the transition to the mainstream. The guidelines can also serve as a tool in helping educators communicate to parents a child's readiness to move into a mainstream middle school.

Although the survey was sent to the heads and teachers of private middle schools, we believe from our experience that the results can be generalized to a public middle school setting. The survey covered the following topics: reading, notetaking, writing, math, research projects, study skills and homework responsibility. Within each topic many skills and strategies were identified. Our primary goal was to learn which skills within each topic area need to be mastered before entering a mainstream middle school and which skills will be taught once the child is enrolled in the middle school. There was considerable agreement among the returned responses. However, areas of differing responses were also instructional. Our goal was to utilize the information gathered through the survey to make some curricular recommendations so that teachers, parents, and students

will know the skills and strategies necessary to ensure that children coming from special education will succeed in both public and private schools.

It is clear that the teacher needs to prepare the student to leave a classroom in which there is a high teacher to student ratio and where teachers help students proceed at the student's own pace. Students are accustomed to being carefully guided and monitored. However, once students are in a mainstream setting, they are expected to become more self directed. Student are to work independently, to understand what is being taught in class, to participate in class discussions, to ask questions, to read and to write on grade level, and to complete assignments. The curriculum must go beyond basic skills. The approaches to learning become critical and broadly include planning, goal setting, and execution without constant monitoring by the teacher. We need to assess if students can write down homework assignments, remember to take home essential materials, manage time, take class notes, write focused essays, and manage long term assignments, for example. Building goal setting, planning, monitoring and follow through strategies into the curriculum are essential to a successful transition from special education to the mainstream. The task of preparing a student to meet those challenges is the domain of the special education school and the focus of the workshop discussions.

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Teaching Reading and Spelling with the Wilson Reading System
Multisensory Structured Language Techniques

The session presents a description of the key components of multisensory structured language methodology using the Wilson Reading System. A research study will be presented. The aim of this study was to determine whether special education pull-out programs with teachers trained in the multisensory instruction of phonological awareness and English word structure yield significant growth in reading and spelling skills.

A total of 220 students were included in the study. All students had a history of reading and spelling difficulties and were identified by special education assessments. Students had a total reading score on the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test at least two years below their grade placement. Their I.Q. scores ranged from low average to high average. Thirty - five percent (76 / 220) had been retained at least one time.

Participating teachers attended a two-day workshop at the beginning of the school year where they were introduced to the critical multisensory teaching principles of the Wilson Reading System. The Wilson Reading System directly teaches phonological awareness and total word structure with multisensory principles of teaching. Teachers then selected a case-study student and completed pretesting with the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test and the Wilson System Pretest.

Upon student approval, each student began instruction with an initial lesson demonstrated by a Wilson Language Trainer. Each teacher then taught two or three lessons per week throughout the school year. A lesson was observed a minimum of five times during the year by the trainer to verify the accuracy of the lesson plan format and techniques. Teacher lesson plans, student written work, and student notebooks were checked at each visit. Teachers attended monthly after-school seminars from September to June. In late May, each student was re-evaluated. At posttesting, the average number of lessons completed was sixty-two.

The Woodcock Reading Mastery pre and post test scores yielded significant gains. In Word Attack, the average gain was 4.6 grade levels. In Passage Comprehension, the average gain was 1.6 grade levels. Gains in Total Reading scores averaged 1.9 grade levels. These gains are striking since students involved in this study previously had made little or no gain in reading. Significant gains in spelling also were obtained. The average gain in raw score was 10. Students increased spelling accuracy and showed significant growth in their understanding of word structure.

Students' improvements in decoding ability, passage comprehension, total reading, and spelling were statistically significant. The results show that students who receive instruction with teachers trained in the Wilson Reading System develop basic reading and spelling skills. In addition, our results indicate students with learning disabilities can make significant gains in reading and spelling.

In conclusion, the current trend toward placing special education students in modified regular education settings without specific remedial instruction should be questioned. In addition to the students' placement into these regular education settings with accommodations, the underlying reading and spelling deficits can and must be improved.

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ESSENTIAL METACOGNITIVE SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE

Several factors impact how people perform in their jobs. There is growing concern among the education and employment communities regarding individuals with severe learning disabilities who feel frustrated and unsuccessful in the workplace. The difficulty individuals with learning disabilities often have learning new procedures and tasks directly impacts their work performance and job credibility.

Many times employment and training as well as literacy and adult education programs are challenged with the necessity to assist individuals with learning disabilities in acquiring basic skills sufficient to enter the workplace. A quick look as the basic curriculum of these programs suggests the major emphasis is focussed on the acquisition of reading, writing, spelling, and mathematics skills necessary to enter the workplace. While these fundamental skills are definitely essential, research continues to present other equally relevant and critical skills.

In two studies addressing the training challenges in the workplace, employers were interviewed to identify essential skills and problem areas in entry-level positions. The results of these studies address the analysis of the essential metacognitive skills needed in the workplace to be a productive employee. The research will present analysis of the responses of the employer, the workplace

education instructor, and the adult workplace student. The information gathered will, in part, lay the groundwork for the development of additional curriculum in literacy and adult education programs as well as effective workplace accommodations for employees with learning disabilities who choose to enter these or similar positions.

While some of the essential skills and problem areas relate more to job training, there is much to glean from these studies and other like it. In addition to reading, writing, spelling, and mathematics; curriculum development must include interpersonal skills, group/team work skills, organization and self-management skills, problem solving and critical thinking skills, and most of all, conversation skills, social skills, and listening skills. If we believe people with learning disabilities and literacy needs have difficulty learning and transferring skills to the workplace, then certainly we would agree that the skills cited in these studies are among the skills which should be taught as part of employment/training and adult education and literacy curriculum.

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Investigating the Effects of Self-Monitoring on the Academic Performance, Maintenance, and Generalization of Two Students with Attentional Deficit Disorders (ADD)

Since the 1980s more students in the United States are considered to be at risk academically because of behavior problems than at any other time in history (Smith, Rogers, Alsalam, Perie, & Martin, 1994). Typically, teachers describe these students as being impulsive, having short attention spans, failing to complete assignments, and generally performing well below their ability levels, as well as their grade levels.

Most of these students have both academic and behavioral difficulties. It is essential not only to find effective and efficient remedies for these problems, but to find remedies that will establish behaviors that will generalize and that will persist. Self-monitoring of on-task behavior has been used with students who are described by teachers as impulsive, who have short attention spans, and who do not complete independent class assignments apparently because of these deficits (Osborne et al., 1987). Students using these procedures achieved increased on-task behavior (Hallahan, Marshall, & Lloyd, 1981) and improved academic performance (Carr & Punzo, 1993).

The purpose of the present study was to provide the following: (a) a simple procedure to teach two seventh-grade students with ADD to self-monitor their own academic performance; (b) evidence of substantial academic improvement, generalization, and maintenance; and (c) recommendations for further applications. To provide evidence of the above, we used a multiple baseline procedure across six and seven academic settings, respectively, for two Caucasian boys whom we'll call Ned and Joe. Ned was 13 years old, had been diagnosed as having an attention deficit disorder, had exhibited behavior problems since kindergarten, and had repeated two grades in elementary school. Joe was 12 years old, was taking medication due to an attention deficit disorder, had trouble concentrating on academic tasks, and was easily distracted by any noise in the room.

After collecting baseline data, the special educator explained the self-monitoring procedure to Ned and Joe and modeled using the self-monitoring chart which each would place on his own folder(s). She told them to count the number of items given, the number of items completed, and the number of items done correctly. Then they recorded this information on the self-monitoring chart attached to the folder for that activity. Prior to learning to self-monitor, both students were performing at or near failing levels. Following self-monitoring training, the data revealed that their accuracy scores ranged from good to superior.

Ned and Joe only self-monitored in four and five settings, respectively, because after they learned to self-monitor in four or five special/general academic settings, their improved academic performance generalized to two settings where they had not been instructed to self-

monitor. Data collected the following school year revealed that, with minimal prompting, their overall improved academic performance maintained.

These findings have the following limitations: (a) all of the students were boys, (b) all of the students were capable of functioning at or near grade level, and (c) the initial training setting was a highly structured special education classroom. Two other concerns relate to maintenance data: (a) these data reflect academic subjects taught only by the special educators and (b) the students may have simply matured over the summer break.

Nevertheless, these findings represent empirical data not only on the efficacy of self-monitoring on improving academic performance in settings where students received instructions to self-monitor, but on the more socially significant finding that students with ADD can assume responsibility for monitoring their own academic behaviors and that this self-monitoring will generalize to settings where there is no teacher supervision/prompts related to self-monitoring. These findings further reveal that the students participating in this investigation maintained high levels of academic performance 3 to 4 months after they had learned to self-monitor.

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Investigating the Effects of Self-Instruction on Narrative Writing Skills of Third-Grade Students with Learning Disabilities

While it appears that most students experience some problems with written language, students with learning disabilities typically find writing difficult. These problems are characterized by their using unsophisticated strategies to generate, frame, and plan text (Graham & Harris, 1989) and by their failure to revise their work once it is completed (MacArthur, Graham, & Schwartz, 1991). Students with learning disabilities must also learn how to manage their own behaviors if they are to function successfully in general education classrooms.

To address these problems, we taught five third-grade students with learning disabilities to use simple cue cards that contained four selected elements of story grammar to improve their narrative writing skills. Prior to learning to use the cue cards, all of the students were at or near failing grades in narrative writing. Following self-instructional training, their narrative writing scores ranged from passing to superior. When the cue cards were removed, all but one of the students' narrative compositions declined or returned to baseline level. These findings are primarily limited by the length of the investigation which was 11 sessions overall, and a second baseline of two sessions for four of the students and only one session for one student. Nevertheless, the findings are relevant to professionals who work with students with learning disabilities because they provide evidence that very simple, inexpensive self-cueing procedures can be used to improve narrative writing skills.

Of greater importance, the young students with learning disabilities in this investigation did learn to monitor their own performance. The ability to work independently, without individual and extensive teacher supervision is essential given the movement to return special education students to general education classrooms.

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The Voices of Literacy in Students with Learning Disabilities.

The decline in enthusiasm towards learning and motivation through elementary and middle grades in students with learning disabilities may affect literacy. The type of tasks students are asked to complete appear to affect the decline in motivation, and in turn, literacy acquisition. Studies show that different tasks affect enthusiasm for learning and literacy acquisition.

Teachers are asked to generate high levels of literacy in all students, both regular and special learners, as well as learners from other cultures. According to Sweet (1993), literacy requires internal motivation. Research shows that internal motivation declines through elementary grades, especially in students with learning disabilities (Chapman, 1988; Eccles Parsons, Midgley, & Adkins, 1984). Recent task-perspective research with students of high, average, and non-learning disabled low achievement levels suggests that the decline may be due to the type of tasks students are expected to complete. As tasks progress from requiring low reading, thinking, and writing skills to high reading, thinking, and writing skills, regular third, fourth, and sixth grade students progress towards intrinsic reasons for learning (Hooper & Miller, 1991; Miller, Adkins, & Hooper, 1993; Hooper, 1994 a & b). The results hold regardless of ability level, developmental level, race, gender, or socioeconomic level. What has not been measured is the effects of different kinds of tasks on students with learning disabilities.

This study used the same design and examined the task responses of students with learning disabilities (Hooper, 1995). A random sample of third and sixth grade students with learning disabilities were interviewed after completing different kinds of ungraded tasks. Interview questions addressed how well students understood the task (task understanding), how well they expected to do (task expectancy), and whether the task was valued (task value) (Eccles, 1983). Tasks are simple when they ask students to think in knowledge or comprehension stages, and write a simple mark (underline), a word, a phrase, or a sentence in response to the tasks questions. Tasks are complex when they ask students to think in application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation stages, and write using sentences, paragraph or paragraphs (Hooper, 1995). Motivation may be learning to increase skills (Intrinsic), learning to please others (extrinsic), or just getting the task done quickly (work-avoidant) (Meece & Holt, 1989). Data were coded in ways that showed the type of motivation generated at both group and individual levels.

Results support the studies with regular learners. Students with learning disabilities become more intrinsically motivated as the task becomes more complex. In inclusion classrooms, a taxonomy of complex tasks in curriculum planning, that includes the direct

teaching of simple tasks where needed to complete the complex tasks, may generate higher literacy in students with learning disabilities.

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Perspectives on Inclusion: A Survey of Parents

Inclusion refers to the placement of children with disabilities in their neighborhood schools in general education environments for services (instead of special education placements). The "full inclusion" model is where all children, including all disabilities and all degrees of severity, be served through the home school and in the regular education environment.

As a delivery system for students with disabilities, inclusion placements are rapidly increasing nation-wide, in urban, suburban, and rural schools. In fact, over 80 percent of the special education students currently receive instruction in the regular education classroom, although some of these students currently receive services in resource rooms. (U.S. Office of Education, 1994). The most recent data from the U.S. Department of Education show that the number of children with disabilities placed in regular classrooms for instruction increased by over 6.1 percent (U.S. Department of Education, 1994).

There is much debate in the literature about the effectiveness of the inclusive schools movement. In inclusion classrooms general early childhood, elementary, and secondary teachers are responsible for many of the special education students. These teachers may have sole responsibility or may work in collaboration with special education teachers. The issues investigated in this study pertain to parents views on inclusion. Do parents understand inclusion and its implications? Do they think their children with disabilities are being well-serviced? What are the views of the parents of children in these classes who do not have disabilities?

The U.S. Department of Education recommends that schools adopt the inclusion model. The reauthorization of IDEA calls for greater parent involvement in placement decisions. Parents should know whether teachers have sufficient knowledge and methodology to manage inclusive settings. Teachers need to learn how to work with support personnel and other professionals through strategies such as collaboration, consultation, team teaching, and peer tutoring.

This research surveyed parents on their perspectives of inclusion. Parents of children with disabilities parents of children who do not have disabilities, all in the Chicago metropolitan area, completed these survey questionnaires. Several hundred parents completed the survey. The questions we sought to find information about included: How do parents of children with disabilities perceive inclusion and judge its effectiveness? How do parents of typical children perceive inclusion and judge its effectiveness for their children? What differences are there among parents of children with various categories of disabilities?

The survey data will be analyzed and the implications of the data will be discussed at the LDA poster session.